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Re:

United States of America

v.

Case No. 3:07CR00001

Kevin Alfred Strom

April 11, 2008

Judge Norman K. Moon

U.S. District Court

PO Box 657

Lynchburg, Virginia 24505

Your Honor,

I am the President of a small railroad, a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois and a friend of Kevin Strom. I am also a former co-trustee of the Revilo P. Oliver Estate Trust.

I have known Kevin Strom since the 1970's when he was married to his first wife. After they were divorced and Kevin moved back to West Virginia, Kevin stopped by my house several times with his children and we on several occasions gave them the use of our lake house for a few days vacation before they continued on their trip. I would usually take them out for dinner once or twice while they were here and I had a chance to observe both the children and Kevin. The children were always excited and very happy to be with their father and vice versa. I observed Kevin closely and always appreciated his good manners and thoughtfulness toward his children. He took them to places and events in our rural area such as parks, county fairs, etc. One boy was autistic and Kevin had to travel without the other children when he was with him as he required Kevin's full time attention. Basically what I observed was that Kevin's kids had a ball when they were with their dad. During Kevin's visits, the last of which was a couple of years ago - Kevin always brought gifts – usually flowers for Elizabeth and I remember once a stuffed shark for Eric - to our now 4 year old twins when he came to visit and played and conversed with them. Eric still loves that stuffed shark.

Kevin has always been a prolific writer. His writings offended some. I was sorry to hear that Kevin and his second wife had separated and were getting divorced, but I was very shocked to hear that the FBI had been brought in. I have never heard of the FBI getting involved in a divorce proceeding and assume they were prompted by persons hostile to Kevin. I am not familiar with respect to the charges of knowingly enticing an individual under the age of 18 years to engage in sexual activity and of attempting to obstruct and influence an official proceeding, but I would find it very hard to believe that Kevin Strom was involved in that sort of activity. I could and do believe that Kevin would be friendly to children and is fond of and patient with children. Kevin and his children played with ours in their make believe world and they all had a great time. My wife Linda and I were there the whole time and never once thought anything was inappropriate and there certainly was nothing sexual.

It is my understanding that Kevin was advised that he could not get a fair trial and would be found guilty. I understand that he was also told that he could not get bail and has remained in prison under extremely harsh, hostile and threatening conditions. I think that these conditions may have coerced his guilty plea. I am not familiar with what if any child pornography Kevin

is accused of possessing. I do know that Kevin collected Northern European art including pictures of statues, etc. which he included in his articles at times. These were all in good taste and again, there was nothing sexual about it.

My fear is that we are developing two standards of prosecution – one for people with ideas that do conform and another for those who do not conform to what is regarded as politically correct – and using the power of the establishment to prosecute those who do not conform. Since I am not aware of all of the details of this case, I can not make judgment on the final outcome, but I do want to tell you that I think Kevin Strom is of good and sound moral character.

Sincerely,


Charles Barenfanger